

## COL. ANDERSON F. PITTS

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DECEMBER 3 (legislative day, NOVEMBER 18), 1943.—Ordered to be printed

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Mr. EASTLAND, from the Committee on Claims, submitted the following

## REPORT

[To accompany S. 1528]

The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1528) for the relief of Anderson F. Pitts, colonel, Field Artillery, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with the recommendation that the bill do pass without amendment.

The purpose of the proposed legislation is to pay to Col. Anderson F. Pitts the sum of \$2,648 in full satisfaction of his claim against the United States for a like amount paid by him from personal funds in the settlement of the accounts of the Service Club, One Hundred and Eighty-fourth Field Artillery, Battle Creek, Mich., which was established with the approval and liquidated by direction of his commanding officer.

## STATEMENT OF FACTS

The War Department transmitted a request to the honorable chairman of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, for this legislation. Therefore, your committee recommend favorable consideration of the bill. Appended is the letter from the Secretary of War.

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WAR DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., November 9, 1943.

HON. ROBERT R. REYNOLDS,  
*Chairman, Committee on Military Affairs,*  
*United States Senate.*

DEAR SENATOR REYNOLDS: There is enclosed herewith draft of a bill which the War Department recommends be enacted into law.

The purpose of the proposed legislation is to pay to Anderson F. Pitts, colonel, Field Artillery, the sum of \$2,648 in reimbursement for personal funds expended by him on or about March 14, 1942, in the settlement of the accounts of the Service Club, One Hundred and Eighty-fourth Field Artillery, Battle Creek, Mich.,

which was established with the approval and liquidated by direction of his commanding officer.

The One Hundred and Eighty-fourth Field Artillery Regiment, a colored regiment of the Illinois National Guard, commanded by Col. Anderson F. Pitts, was inducted into Federal service January 6, 1941, and arrived at Fort Custer, Mich., January 15, 1941. No United Service Organization club or other service recreational facilities for colored soldiers existed at Fort Custer or in nearby Battle Creek. In fact, public recreational facilities for colored soldiers were practically nonexistent.

Colonel Pitts, having concern for the welfare of his regiment, in the late summer of 1941 took the initiative in organizing a service club for the members of his command in Battle Creek. Colonel Pitts obtained permission to establish such a club from the post commander of Fort Custer, since the Fifth Infantry Division, to which Colonel Pitts' regiment was attached for administration and training, was away on maneuvers at the time. Officers of the One Hundred and Eighty-fourth Regiment donated \$400 and citizens of Battle Creek donated a like amount to begin the project. A building was leased and improvements, including water, sewerage, wiring, plumbing, and heating were contracted for and installed. The cost of the improvements was approximately \$3,900, which was to be paid from proceeds of the club under long-term credit agreements. The club was formally opened October 25, 1941, although remodeling was not completed until January 20, 1942.

Meanwhile the Fifth Infantry Division returned from maneuvers and its departure for an overseas station became imminent. The commanding general of the division on March 11, 1942, ordered Colonel Pitts to liquidate all indebtedness of the club within 3 days. At this time the outstanding liabilities amounted to approximately \$3,400. Colonel Pitts assumed personal responsibility and used \$3,248 of his own funds in liquidating the debts of the club. He was later able to realize \$600 on the fixtures and lease of the club. However, he suffered a net personal loss of \$2,648 in complying with the order of his superior to fully liquidate the club within 72 hours.

The War Department believes that Colonel Pitts acted in good faith and with the best interests of the service in mind in establishing the service club and that, in all equity, the loss resulting from its hasty liquidation should not be borne by him. Since there is no appropriation available to the War Department which can be used in cases of this kind, legislative relief is the only means by which Colonel Pitts can be reimbursed.

The cost of the proposed legislation would be \$2,648.

A similar letter has been addressed to the Speaker, House of Representatives.

The Bureau of the Budget advises that there is no objection to the submission of the proposed legislation for the consideration of the Congress.

Sincerely yours,

HENRY L. STIMSON,  
*Secretary of War.*

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